

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Examiner's Action dated September 20, 2005. Applicants have amended the claims to clarify key features of the invention and overcome the claim objections and rejections. No new matter has been added, and the amendments place the claims in better condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request entry of the amendments to the claims. The discussion/arguments provided below reference the claims in their amended form.

CLAIMS OBJECTIONS

In the present Office Action, Claims 1-21 are objected to because of informalities. Accordingly, Applicants have amended Claims 1-21 to remove the informalities and overcome the claim objections. The amendments also place the claims in condition for allowance.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the present Office Action, Claims 1-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Hill, et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,141,779). *Hill* does not render Applicants' claimed invention unpatentable because one skilled in the art would not find the features recited within Applicants' claims to be suggested by *Hill*. For example, one skilled in the art would not find *Hill* to be suggestive of the following features of Applicants' independent claim:

counting a number of said defective cells or active elements containing defective cells; and

determining a minimum amount of post production testing required on said integrated circuit device to achieve a pre-determined measure of reliability of said integrated circuit device, said determining based upon said number of defective cells or active elements containing defective cells compared against one or more preset, normalized numbers. (Claim 1; emphasis added).

Many of the dependent claim features are also not be suggested by *Hill*. For example:

comparing said number against a first of the one or more preset normalized numbers; and

when said number is less than the first preset normalized number, assigning a minimum amount of post production testing associated with the first preset normalized number.

With the features of Applicants' claimed invention clarified by the amendments, it is clear that *Hill*, which generally teaches about automatically programming a memory redundancy

map based on detection of faulty circuit elements (Abstract and Summary), does not suggest the basic features of Applicants' claimed invention. The cited sections of *Hill* provide a mechanism for "determining the position of the bit corresponding to the faulty circuit element...by counting the number of shifts required to shift the bit...to one end of said sticky compare register" (col. 2, ll 51-57).

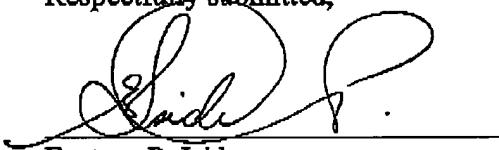
Hill clearly does not suggest key features of Applicants' invention, and one skilled in the art would not find Applicants' invention unpatentable over *Hill*. Applicants Claims 1-21 are therefore allowable.

CONCLUSION §103

Applicants have diligently responded to the Office Action by amending the claims to overcome the claim objections and by providing arguments showing why *Hill* does not suggest key features of Applicants' claimed invention. The amendments overcome the §103 rejection, and Applicants, therefore, respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for all claims now pending.

Applicants further request the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney of record at 512.343.6116 if such would further or expedite the prosecution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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